Study Online with Open Christian University and Earn a State-licensed Qualification from California, USA

What is the Significance of the Little Book that John Eats in Revelation 10:9?

Sixbert SANGWA • May 20, 2024

In Revelation 10:9, the apostle John is instructed by an angel to eat a small book. This event raises questions about the nature and significance of the book. To understand this, we need to place it within the broader context of the Book of Revelation.

Revelation 4 describes a heavenly scene where God is seated on His throne, holding a book sealed with seven seals (Revelation 4:1). Only Jesus, referred to as the Lamb, is found worthy to open this book and break its seals (Revelation 5:6). Each seal opened by Jesus triggers a catastrophic event on earth. Upon the opening of the seventh seal, seven trumpets are sounded, each heralding further judgments (Revelation 8:1–2). After the sixth trumpet, a mighty angel appears, roaring like a lion and uttering words of thunder (Revelation 10:1–3). John is about to record what he hears but is told to seal up the words and not write them down (Revelation 10:4).

The angel then declares that there will be no more delay in God's plan, and that "*the mystery of God is finished, as He had proclaimed to His servants the prophets*" (Revelation 10:7). Following this, a voice from heaven instructs John to take the book from the angel's hand (Revelation 10:8). When John requests the book, the angel tells him to eat it, warning that it will taste sweet in his mouth but turn bitter in his stomach (Revelation 10:9). John complies, experiencing the sweetness and subsequent bitterness exactly as foretold (Revelation 10:10).

This imagery is not unique to John. In Ezekiel 2–3, God gives the prophet Ezekiel a scroll filled with "*lamentations, mourning, and woe*" (Ezekiel 2:10) and instructs him to eat it. Similarly, Ezekiel finds the scroll sweet as honey in his mouth (Ezekiel 3:3). Both John and Ezekiel are thus symbolically ingesting God's judgments.

The little book in Revelation appears to be the same book sealed and opened by the Lamb, containing the final judgments of God against the nations. The act of eating the book signifies internalizing the message of these judgments. Once the final seal is opened, the judgments written in the book are set in motion, fulfilling God's mysteries as revealed to His prophets (Revelation 10:7).

In Revelation, God provides a crucial testimony for the churches. The mysteries, once hidden, are now disclosed and recorded in John's writings. The bitterness John experiences might symbolize the heavy burden of the prophetic message he must deliver, as subsequent visions depict even harsher judgments during the great tribulation (Revelation 10:11).

John's prophecies underscore the urgency and severity of the coming judgments. He records Jesus' warnings about His role as the rightful Judge and His imminent return (Revelation 22:12–13). Jesus emphasizes the blessing for those who heed the words of Revelation (Revelation 22:7). Through John's revelation, believers are given a preview of how the story concludes, challenging us to decide how we will respond. Will we ignore Jesus' warnings, or will we heed them and accept His offer of the water of life, which is freely given (Revelation 22:17)? Understanding these prophetic messages invites us to reflect deeply on our spiritual readiness and response to God's unfolding plan.

Related Articles

- What Is the Mark of the Beast ?
- What is the Significance of 666?
- What are the ten horns of the beast?
- What Are the Seven Heads of the Beast in Revelation?
- What is the image of the beast prophesied in Revelation ?
- What Does the Bible Say About the Revived Roman Empire?
- Why Does the United Nations, and Not Other Kingdoms, Qualify as the Seventh Head of the Beast?

Further Resources

- Discover Online Ministry Opportunities at Open Christian Ministries (USA)
- Pursue an Online Christian Degree from Open Christian University (USA)
- Explore Christian Business Services from the Center for Faith and Work (Rwanda)

← Back to blog

Comments (0)

Post Comment